

Laurel Hill Update

By the Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee

August 2005

The Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee was established by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in February 2005 to monitor the development of the Reformatory and Penitentiary area at Laurel Hill, adjacent to Silverbrook Road in Lorton, VA.



This committee-sponsored electronic newsletter is provided to keep citizens informed about adaptive reuse and other developments at Laurel Hill.

Laurel Hill News

The Fairfax County Architectural Review Board, in conjunction with the Fairfax County History Commission and the Lorton Heritage Society, are moving forward with the nomination of a 512-acre district at Laurel Hill to the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district would include the Reformatory and Penitentiary area adjacent to Silverbrook Road as well as the Occoquan facility adjacent to Ox Road (Route 123).

The Fairfax County Park Authority's master plan for approximately 1,200 acres at Laurel Hill Park will face additional review this fall. The county's Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to review the plan, prior to submission of its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Here is a list of upcoming meetings related to Laurel Hill:

September 14, 2005: The Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee will meet at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room 6 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

September 22, 2005: Mt. Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland will sponsor a public meeting at the South County Secondary School to discuss the nomination of a 512-acre site at Laurel Hill to the National Register of Historic Places. The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m.

October 5, 2005: Fairfax County History Commission will discuss the nomination.
7:30 p.m., Fairfax City Regional Library, 3915 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax

October 6, 2005: The Fairfax County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at the Government Center to review the Fairfax County Park Authority's master plan for Laurel Hill Park.

October 13, 2005: The Fairfax County Architectural Review Board will discuss the nomination
6:30 p.m., Rooms 9 & 10, Fairfax County Government Center.

October 17, 2005: The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing about the National Register nomination. The hearing will start at 4:30 p.m., at the Fairfax County Government Center.

October 25, 2005: The Virginia Department of Historic Resources will provide an opportunity for public input about the National Register nomination during a meeting at the Fairfax County Government Center in Conference Rooms 4 and 5. The meeting will start at 7:00 p.m.

November 2, 2005: The Fairfax County History Commission will complete its formal review, comment and recommendation as required. 7:30 p.m., Fairfax City Regional Library, 3915 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax

November 10, 2005: The Fairfax County Architectural Review Board will complete its formal review, comment and recommendation as required. 6:30 p.m., Rooms 9 & 10, Fairfax County Government Center

August 3 Oversight Committee Meeting

Responses to Requests for Expression of Interest

The Fairfax County government is inviting respondents to the Request for Expression of Interest (ROI) to provide additional information, which will help inform the Request for Proposal process. The information will be available in time for discussion during the Oversight Committee's meeting in September.

As noted in the Oversight Committee's June newsletter, the County received 16 responses to the Request for Expression of Interest (ROI) by the June 3, 2005 deadline.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which requires more detailed planning and financial information from potential candidates, is scheduled to begin this fall.

Memorandum of Agreement – Status Report

The Oversight Committee reviewed the status of the proposed amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement. The MOA was negotiated as part of the transfer of Laurel Hill from federal to county ownership. However, it does not include representation of the County's master plan recommendations for the adaptive reuse areas. The recommendations were developed by the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Citizens Task Force and unanimously accepted by the Board of Supervisors on December 6, 2004.

The Task Force recommended amending Paragraph 10 of the Memorandum of Agreement to include the Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee as a participant in the development of adaptive reuse strategies in the area designated as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The Project Advisory Committee will represent the Board of Supervisors' approved master plan recommendations for the Reformatory and Penitentiary areas.

According to Chris Caperton, the County's Laurel Hill coordinator, a preliminary survey of signatories to the MOA indicated a willingness to support an amendment. The Oversight Committee will defer action on the proposed amendment until September, pending additional input by the signatories and County staff.

Fairfax County Planning Commission Hearing – Laurel Hill Park Plan

The Oversight Committee voted to review the Fairfax County Park Authority's Laurel Hill Park plan and ensure it is in harmony with plans for the adaptive reuse areas at Laurel Hill. If appropriate, a member of the Oversight Committee will testify at the October 6 Planning Commission hearing or provide written testimony.

Architectural Review Board Draft Standards and Guidelines

The Oversight Committee will send a letter to the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board (ARB) encouraging completion of its draft standards and guidelines for Laurel Hill by January 2006. The ARB also will be encouraged to hold at least one public meeting in the South County area to allow public review and comment about the guidelines.

Currently, there are no standards and guidelines for review of adaptive re-use projects involving Laurel Hill structures that are considered historically significant. A professional consultant (EDAW) developed the first draft of standards and guidelines for the ARB in 2003.

National Register of Historic Places Nomination

The Oversight Committee was informed that County staff anticipates delivery of the draft nomination during the first week of September. The entire draft will be posted on the County's web site later that month (**Note:** Please refer to the "Laurel Hill News" section of this newsletter for public meeting dates related to the National Register nomination).

Next Oversight Committee Meeting – September 14

The next meeting of the Oversight Committee will be 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 14, at the Fairfax County Government Center.

The Oversight Committee's next electronic newsletter will be published in September.

Additional information about the land use plans for Laurel Hill, including parkland and adaptive reuse areas are available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/